

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

A certificate program provides a set of learning experiences concentrated in a specific set of educational goals. Academic credit earned in certificate programs may be awarded at the graduate or undergraduate levels. Such programs may include certificates, diplomas or other non-degree awards. Certificate programs may grant academic credit, continuing education units (CEUs), or they may include non-credit offerings..

Certificates of completion/participation (non-credit) may be awarded for completion of workshops, short courses and shorter sequences of credit courses. The certificate issued at the completion of the program does not indicate certification of attainment of any specific level of knowledge or competence. Admission requirements vary by program. Certificates of completion/participation do not indicate credit completion. Certificates of participation do not appear on transcripts. Certificates of participation may be produced by individual units and should not bear the University seal. Certificates of completion/participation are approved through departmental curriculum approval procedures with no further institutional review. Examples include the Publishing Institute Certificate.

Specialized Certificates (academic credit) may be awarded for completion of shorter sequences of credit courses (12-23 quarter hours or 8-15 semester hours). Specialized certificates issued at the completion of the program indicate certification of attainment specific skills, knowledge, or competencies in a well-defined area of study. While admission requirements and standards vary by program, applicants must meet minimum requirements for admission to the University. Specialized Certificates appear on transcripts and are approved through the institutional curriculum approval procedures. Credits applied to specialized certificates may be applied to Academic Certificates or degrees at the same level (i.e., graduate or undergraduate). Credits may not be applied to multiple specialized certificates. Transfer credit toward a certificate is limited to 25% of the minimum number of credits required for the certificate. Course substitutions and/or waivers are not accepted for a Specialized Graduate Certificate. Institutional time limits for completion apply. Digital and paper certificates are produced institutionally.

Certificates of specialization/concentrations (academic credit) provide substantial education in an academic discipline and represent the achievement of competence in a well-defined area of study and are embedded within the major and degree programs. The number of credits in the specialization/concentration may vary by unit. Units are encouraged to use “concentrations” to officially denote a specialization within a student’s primary area of study. Admission requires acceptance and enrollment into the degree program. Certificates of specialization appear on transcripts associated with an awarded degree. Certificates of participation may be produced by individual units and should not bear the University seal. They are approved through the institutional curriculum approval procedures.

Academic certificate programs provide substantial education in a specific academic discipline or in interdisciplinary areas, but center on a coherent and specific body of knowledge. Academic certificate programs represent the achievement of competence in a well-defined area of study. Academic certificates require a minimum of 24 quarter hours or 16 semester hours of credit. While admission requirements and standards vary by program, applicants must meet minimum requirements for admission to the University. Academic certificates appear on transcripts and are approved through the institutional curriculum approval procedures. Credits applied to shorter certificate programs (e.g., specialized certificates) may be applied to academic certificates, but may not be applied to multiple academic certificates. Credits applied to Academic certificates may be applied to degrees at the same level (i.e., graduate or undergraduate). Transfer credit toward a certificate is limited to 25% of the minimum number of credits required for the certificate. Institutional time limits for completion apply. Digital and paper certificates are produced institutionally.

Noncredit Certificates

Continuing Education Unit (CEU) certificates (non-credit) may be awarded for education programs. A CEU is a standard unit for measuring continuing education and training activities. CEUs generally are calculated based on contact hours. 1 CEU = 10 contact hours. Continuing education units should be awarded based on standards developed by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) or other recognized organization governing professional continuing education. Admission requirements vary by program. CEU courses appear on a distinct institutional CEU transcript. CEUs are not equivalent to academic credits and do not count toward academic degrees. CEU certificates may be produced by individual units but should be distinct in appearance from that of any academic certificate or institutional diploma.

Micro-credentials and badges. A micro-credential may be awarded for completion of a shorter class, workshop, or program to gain specified skills or competencies. A digital badge is the visual representation of having earned a micro-credential and can be shared on various online platforms as evidence of the earner’s achievement. Micro-credentials are approved through the institutional curriculum approval procedures.

Time Limit for Completion of the Program

Certificate program candidates are expected to complete program requirements within three years of beginning their programs, as measured by the matriculation into the degree program.

Failure to complete the program within the established time limits will result in termination unless the student successfully petitions for an extension to the Vice Provost for Research and Graduate Education. The college, school, or department and the student’s advisor must recommend this extension. If it is not approved, the student will be terminated from the program. Students may petition for an extension of time for a minimum of one quarter and up to a maximum of one year per request. For more information, see Exceptions (<http://bulletin.du.edu/graduate/academic-and-student-support-services-policies-and-procedures/academic-exceptions-complaints-grievances-and-appeals/exceptions/>) regarding extensions of time.